

Cabana Winery and Bistro at Family Winemakers 2017

[Cabana](#) is the first of two central valley wineries we visited at [Family Winemakers 2017](#). (Dancing Coyote is the second.) Located in East Sacramento, the official name is Cabana Winery and Bistro. According to several reviews ([here](#) and [here](#)), the bistro operation is worthy of a standalone restaurant. But, naturally, we'll focus on their wine.

Cabana is the product of **Bob Smerling**. After founding and running Renwood Winery (Amador County) for 17 years, his daughters Sarah and Kelly convinced him to strike out on his own. With his wife Irene, he opened Cabana in 2013.



Sarah and Kelly Smerling

Bob likes the East Sacramento location for several reasons. First, there is **easy access to grapes from Napa, Sonoma, Lodi, and the Sierra foothills region**. Second, he **likes the idea of urban wineries**. He discovered that after a visit to Santa Barbara. Current production is 6,000 cases aiming for 9,000.

Cabana makes 14 different wines. But we'll only review one,

their **California pinot noir**. Sadly, our review is too late for you to take advantage of their August pinot madness sale. This terrific wine was offered at \$100 per case. But I predict there will be more available next August.

Cabana's **2014 California pinot noir** does not raise expectations on the nose. The aromas are flat. But **the palate is dense chocolate with notes of coffee**. The wine is 100% pinot noir, 30% Carneros and 70% Lodi grapes. As Bob described it, "You get the barnyard from Lodi, you get the body and aroma from Napa."

If you're in the Sacramento area, these folks are worth a visit. Heck, **they're worth a visit even if you're not nearby**.